

CUTT

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Does Bentgrass Overseeding Work?

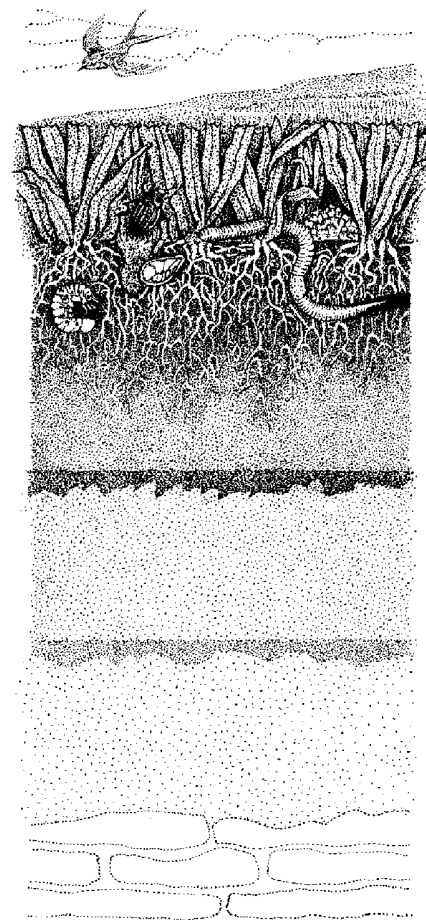
Player expectations continue to increase for superior playing conditions. In particular, the putting green is the most scrutinized, managed area on the golf course. It follows then that golf course superintendents regularly strive to utilize all available technology to produce the highest quality product.

The golf course construction boom of the 1990's resulted in hundreds of new putting surfaces across the country, built with the aid of the latest technology in rootzone and plant materials. In addition, superintendents are becoming more aware of the advantages of using the "new generation" of bentgrass cultivars. This has occurred because golfers are playing on the new surfaces and pressuring superintendents (a phenomenon that has increased following the U.S. Open Championship at Pinehurst where the greens were converted to a new cultivar), or as a result of research on cultivar performance. In either case, there is significant appeal to providing acceptable quality at mowing heights below 0.125" with the ability to produce ball roll distances in the 11 to 13 feet range. ■

Most golf facilities are not in a position to reconstruct the putting greens, however, they would like the benefits of new technology, especially increased ball roll. As a result, golf course superintendents at established facilities have been interested in introducing the new cultivars into existing putting greens. This desire to alter the species composition of the putting green is not new. For years, superintendents have attempted to increase populations of bentgrass in mixed

stands of annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) and creeping bentgrass. The major obstacle to successful population shifts has been the obtrusiveness of the practices required to affect a noticeable change. Simply, it has been a challenge to shift populations in a way that is transparent to the golfer. Herein lies the ecological principles that govern shifts in populations of organisms.

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